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Let's Do Better

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Let's Do Better

by Munro Leaf

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When our ancestors lived

in dark,

dank caves

they

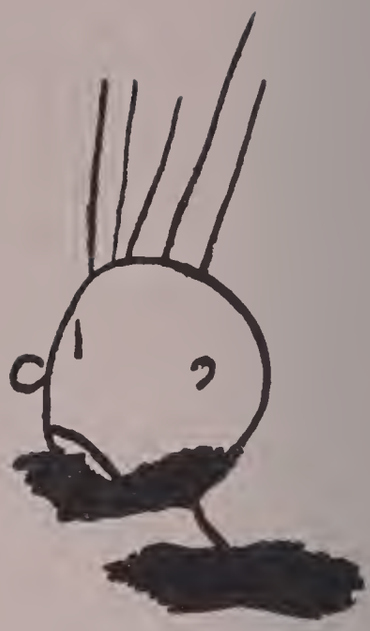
were

very

rough

on each other.

Everybody



was

scared.

If there wasn't enough food to go around, somebody starved.

And if there wasn't enough shelter or clothing to keep everybody warm, somebody froze or got sick and died.

So it was everybody for himself or herself just to stay alive.

The strong and the clever people either beat up the others or tricked them into being dead or out of the way.

Some wise people

decided that this was a very stupid

way to go on living, always being

scared of each other.

The very simple idea came

to them that

if some of them got together

and worked together

they could feed themselves, clothe

themselves

and share what shelter there

was or that could be built.

So they lived together as

tribes, gangs, groups

or anything

you want to call a lot of people

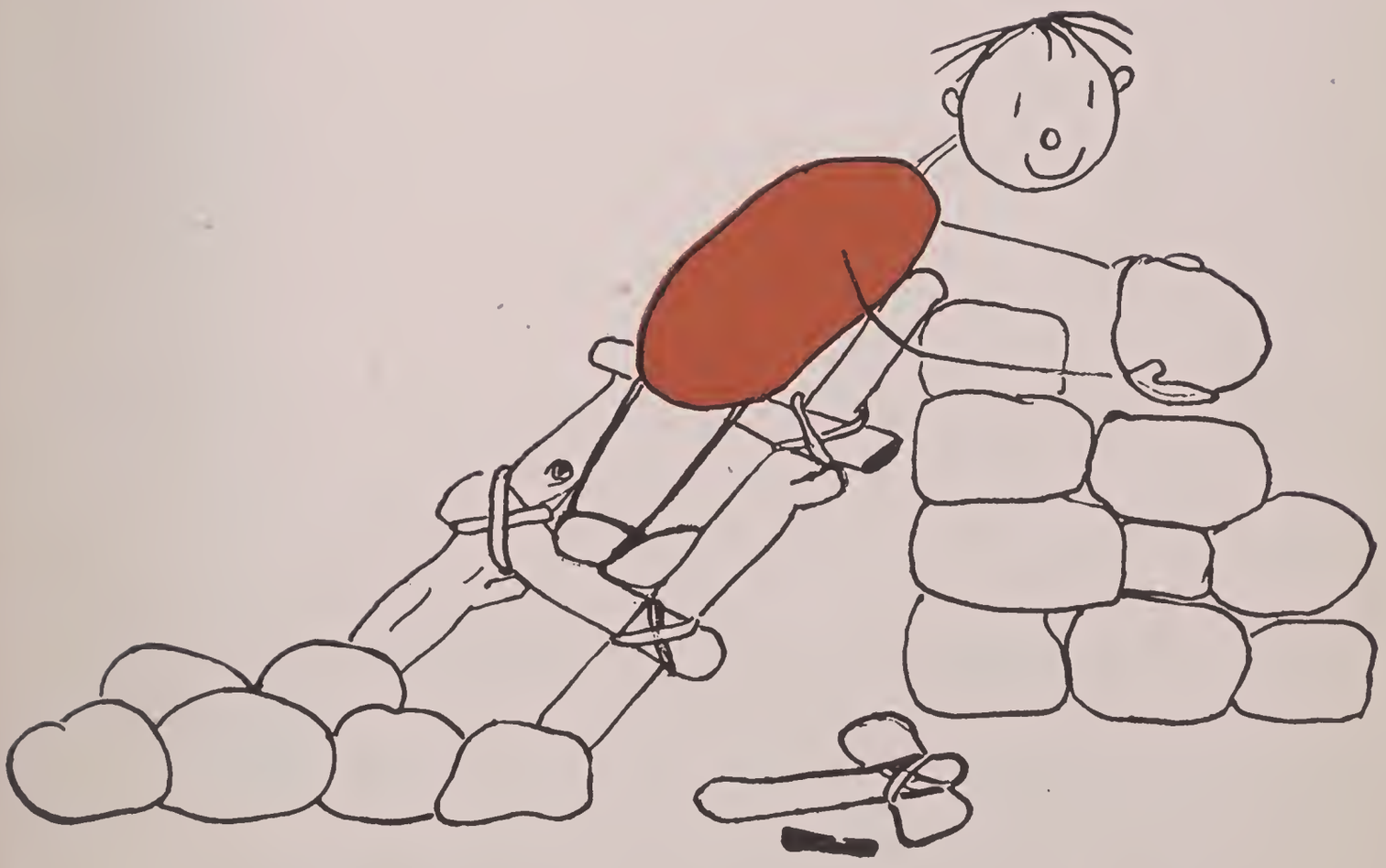
who live together.

It made sense.

Naturally, some of them could do certain things better than others could.

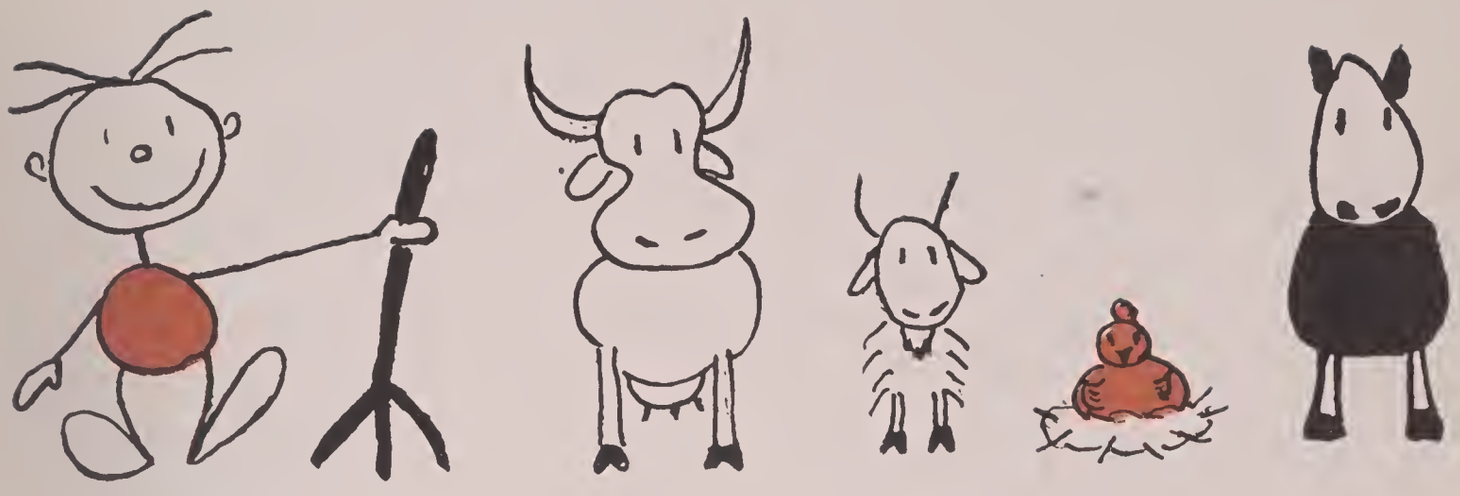
One man might be a very good house builder,

but he might be



the clumsiest, noisiest hunter in the tribe. The sensible thing to do with him was to let him build houses, while somebody else did the hunting. They all needed both houses and food.

As the tribes grew bigger more people did different things. Some were very good at making things to eat grow out of the ground,

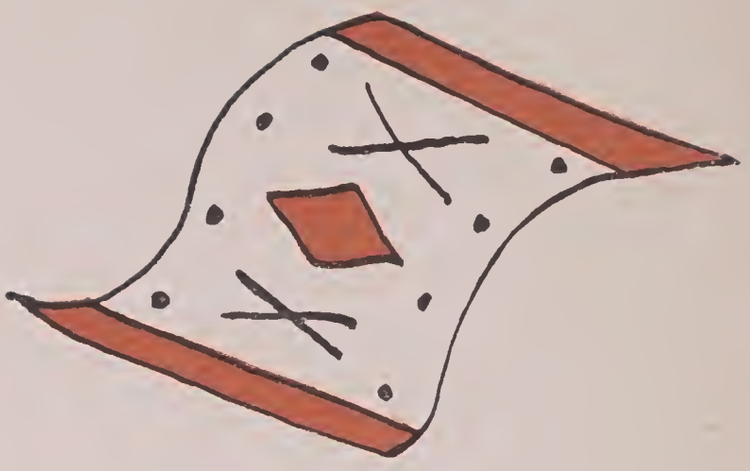


or raising cows, goats, chickens

or horses.

They became farmers.

Some could make
bows and arrows
or
pots and pans
or

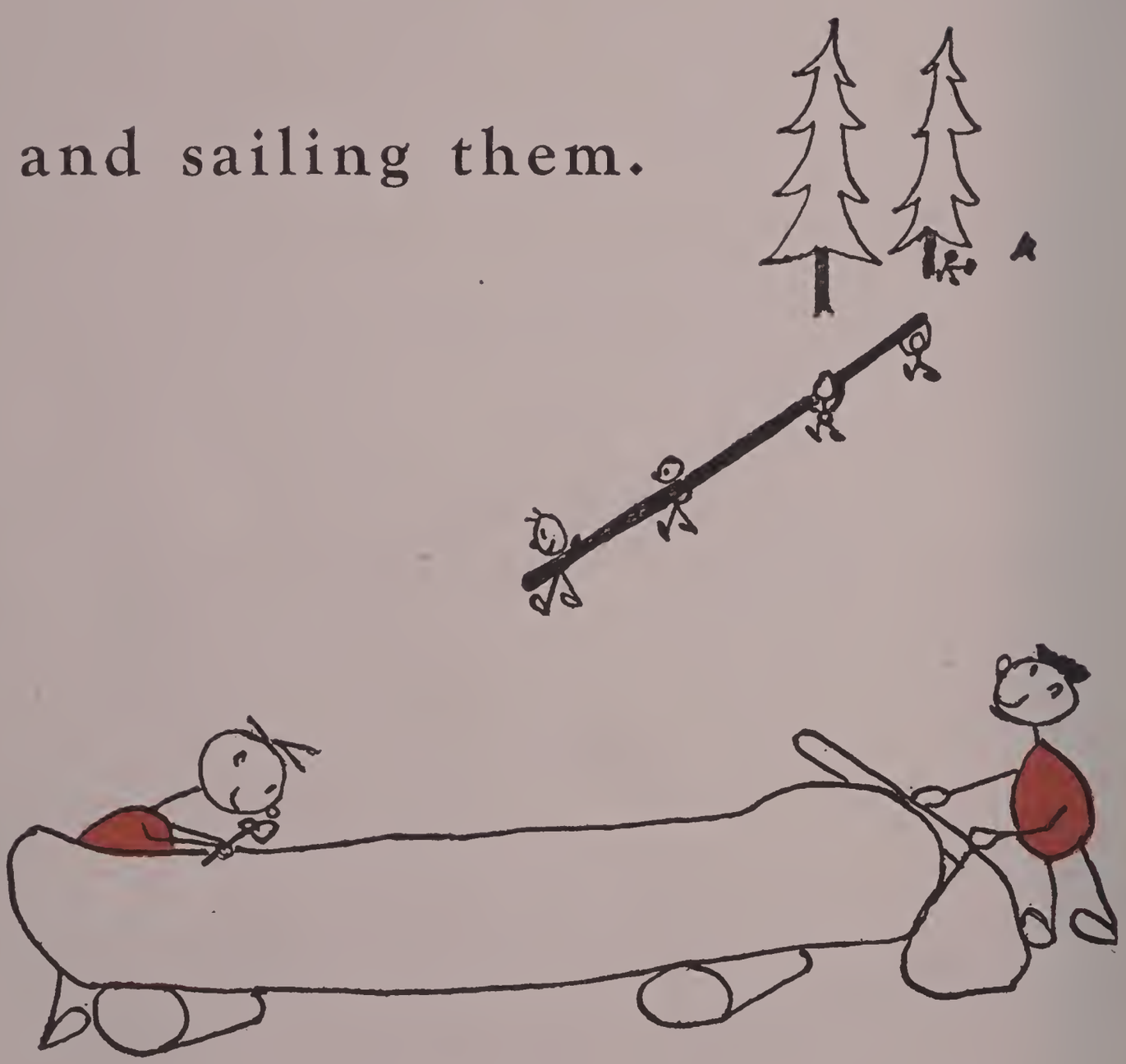


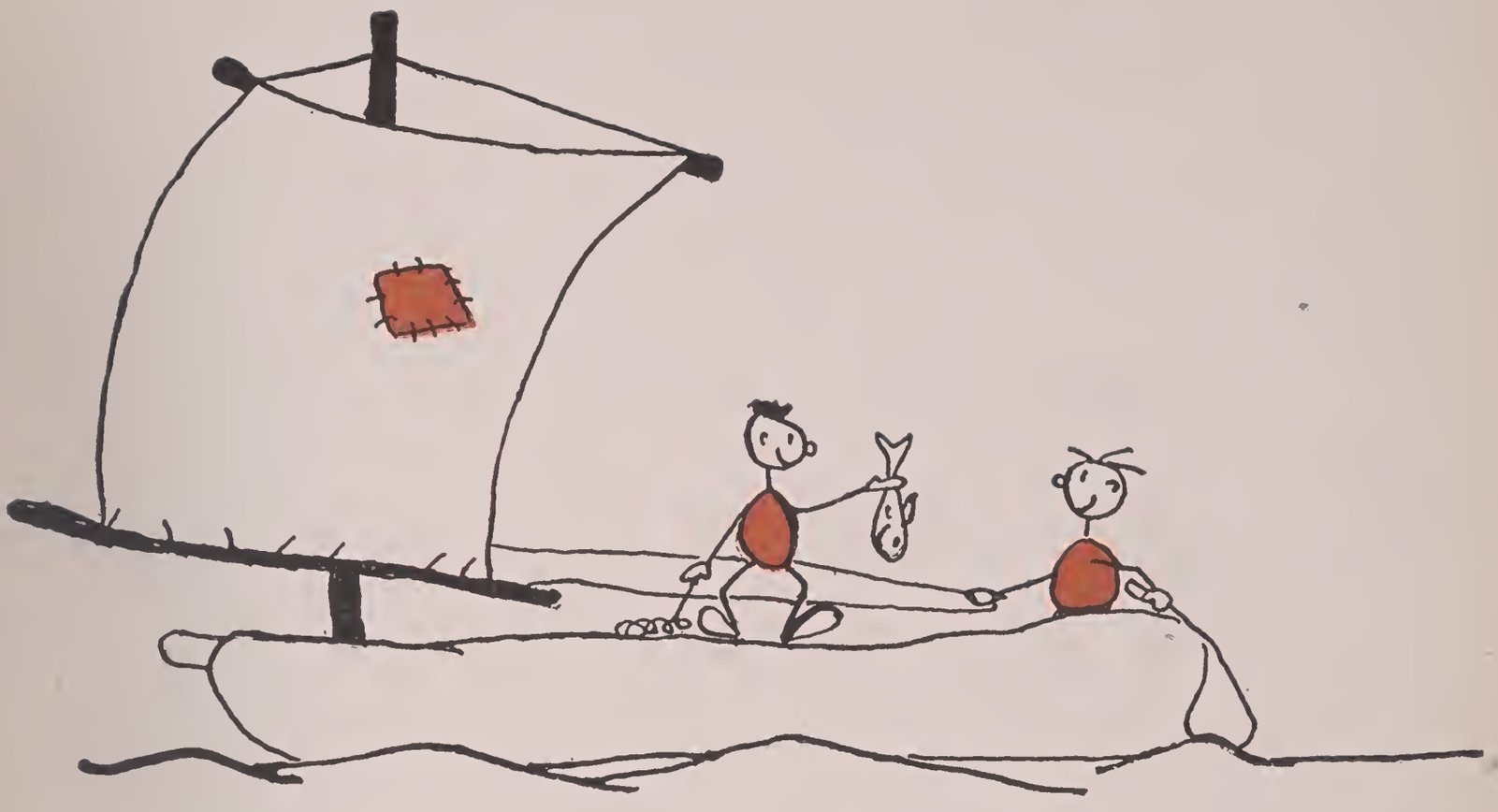
clothes
and
blankets—
they became manufacturers.

Others were good at

building boats

and sailing them.





They became ship builders

and sailors.

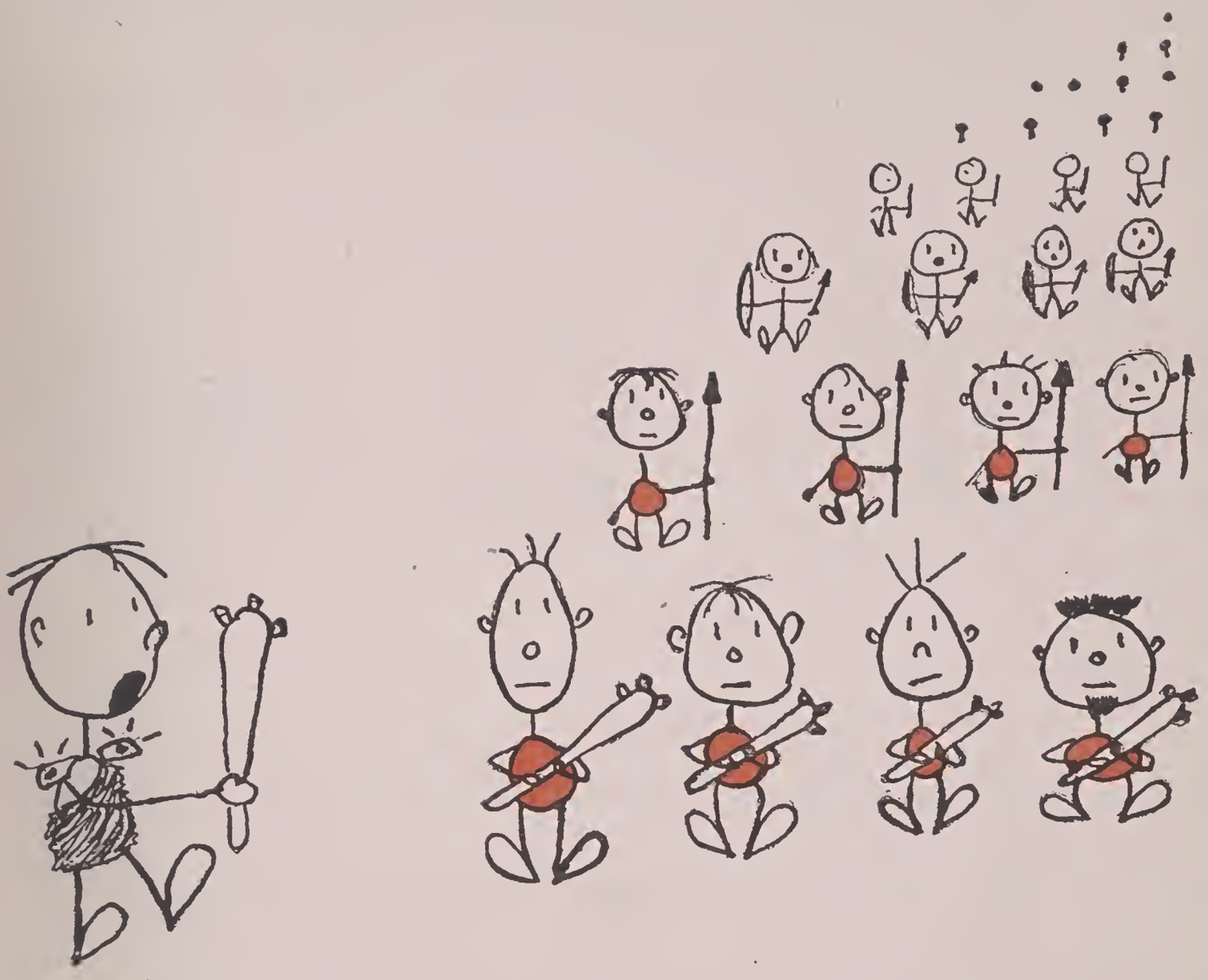
Still, most of the men of

the tribe who could

fight at all

had to be

soldiers.



The reason for that

was just this:

There were always other tribes living somewhere not far away,

and if they didn't have as good food or shelter or clothing as others they would try to take them.
That always wound up in a fight.
If the tribes were big enough, then the fights were big enough to be battles

and the whole mess was
called a

In these wars—in any wars—somebody always got hurt.

Some were killed, homes got smashed and the things that people had worked hard for were taken away from them. That made 'most everybody unhappy.

No matter which side won or lost, there were always a lot of people on both sides who were made very miserable.

The worst of it was that if one tribe or gang or nation decided that war was foolish it didn't dare to go on living sensibly by just helping each other and trusting other tribes to do the same. Sooner or later another bunch would jump them and beat them up—no matter how right they might be.

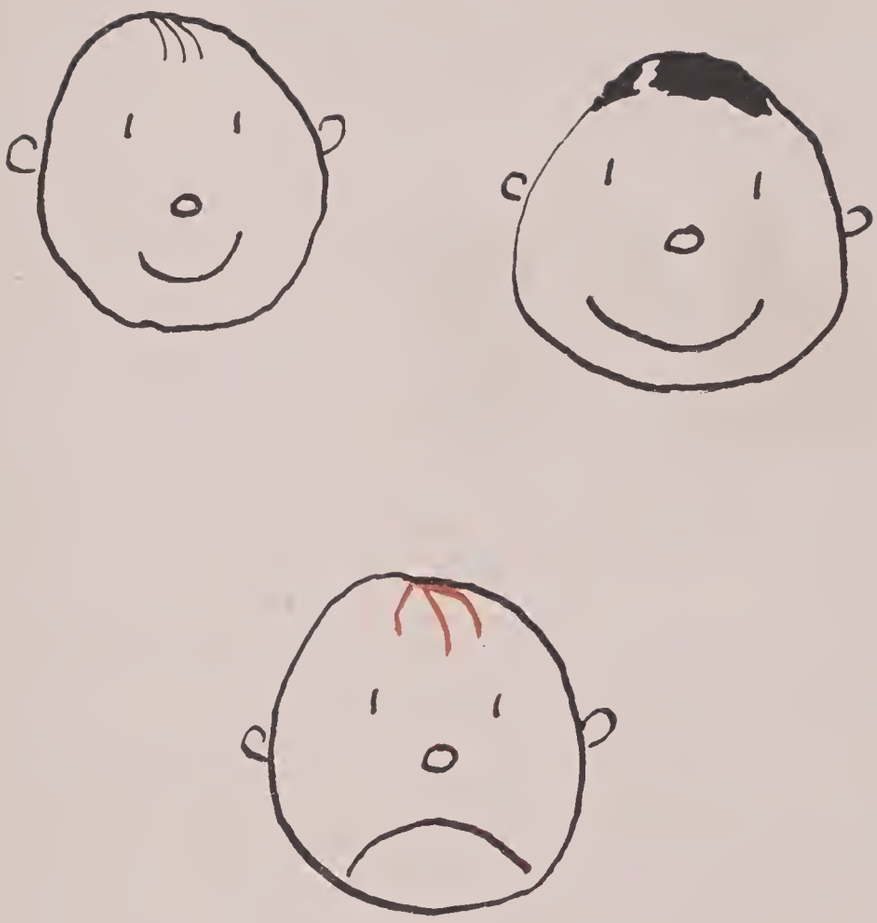
The sensible and the happy way of living just wouldn't work—unless everybody felt the same way about it. That is just as true today as it ever was in the days of our ancestors.

Now the people who have always had the most to do with how we live anywhere in the world have been the

Thinkers.

These *Thinkers* can be divided into three different kinds and two of the three kinds can be good for us all.

The third kind is always getting us into trouble.



The first kind of Thinker and probably the most important, is the Leader.

Leaders are strong people. Not always strong in their muscles, but strong in their minds and in their power to get other people to do things the way that the Leader thinks is best for them.

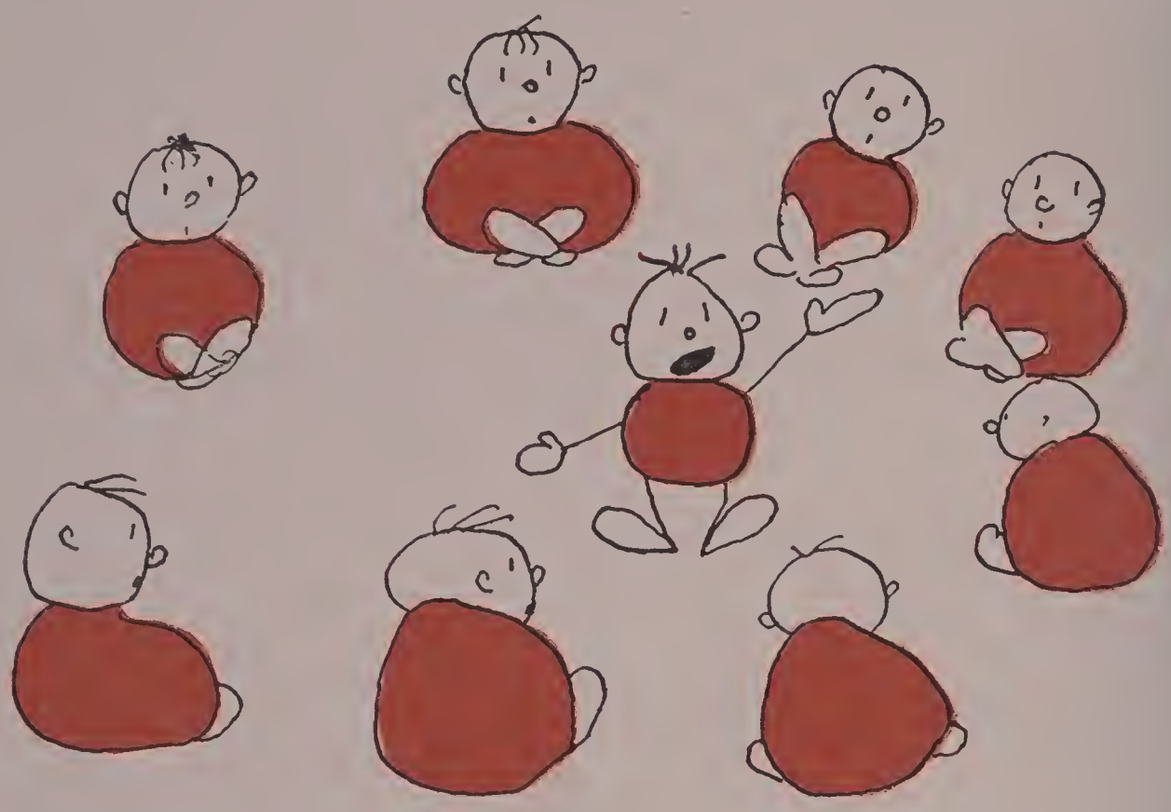
Good Leaders are always trying to think up ways for people to get along together better.

After all, rules and ways for getting along together are all that

GOVERNMENT

really is.

Not all tribes picked their leaders the same way

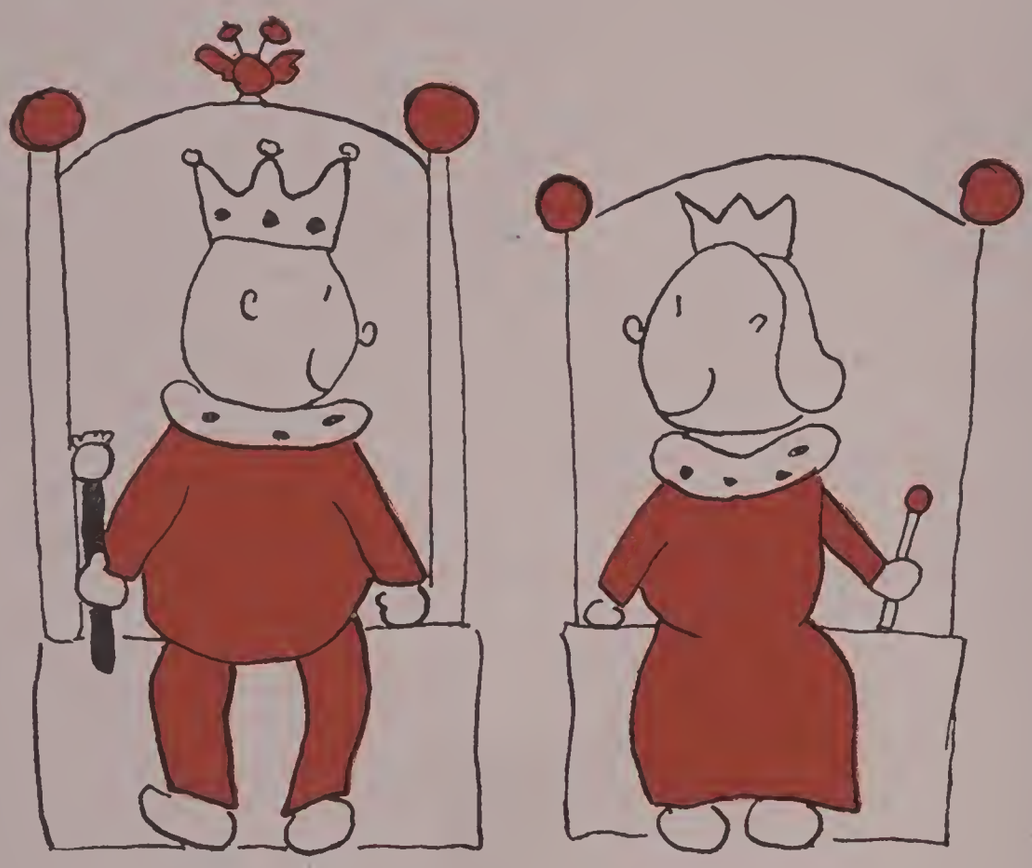


and we still don't, now that we, the people of the world, are divided up into countries or nations.

Some of us pick our leaders by asking nearly everybody who he or she thinks should be the one. The one the most people want is it.

That is pretty much the way we do it in this country, and we call that way, Democracy.

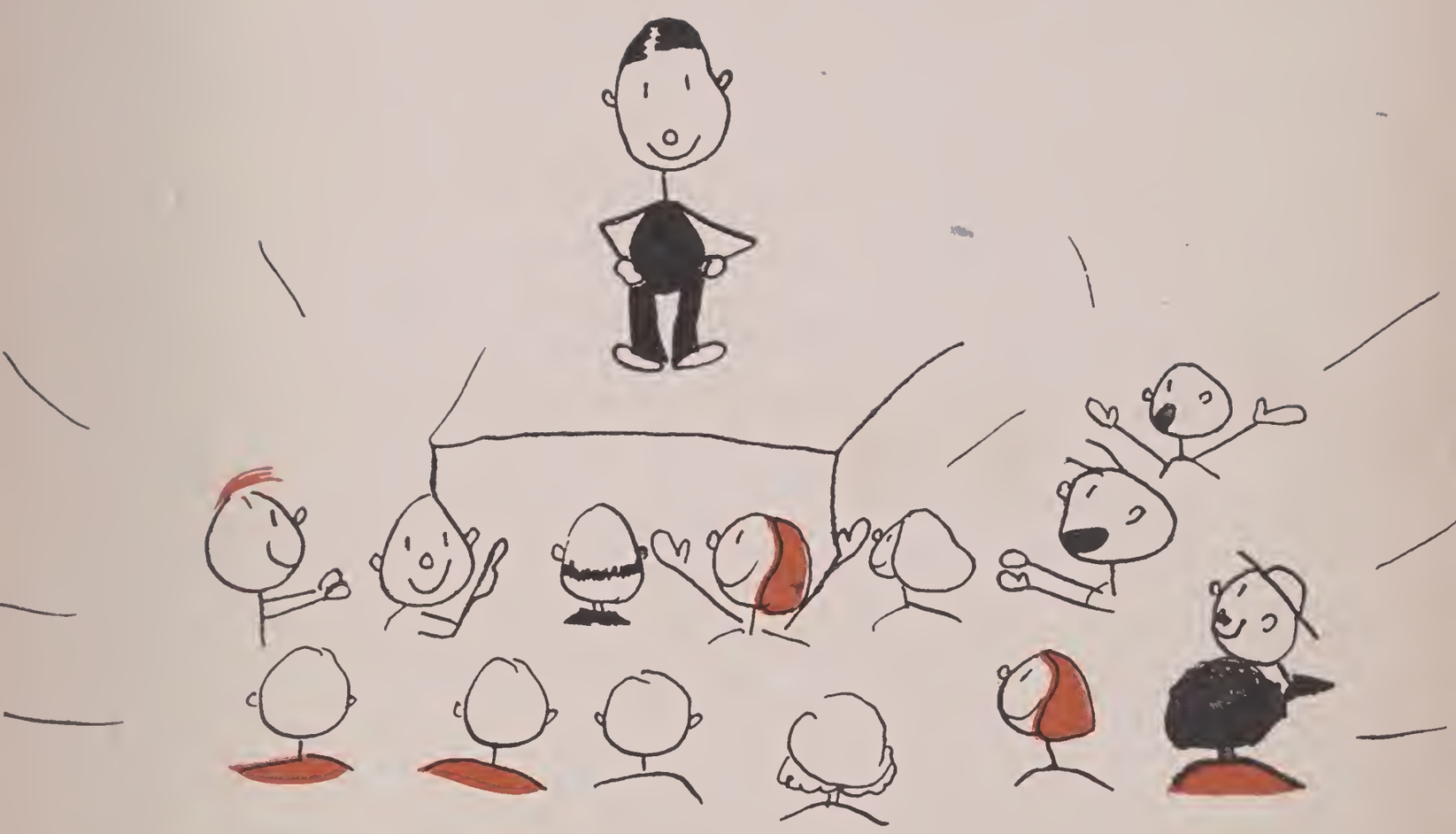
Some other nations do it differently.



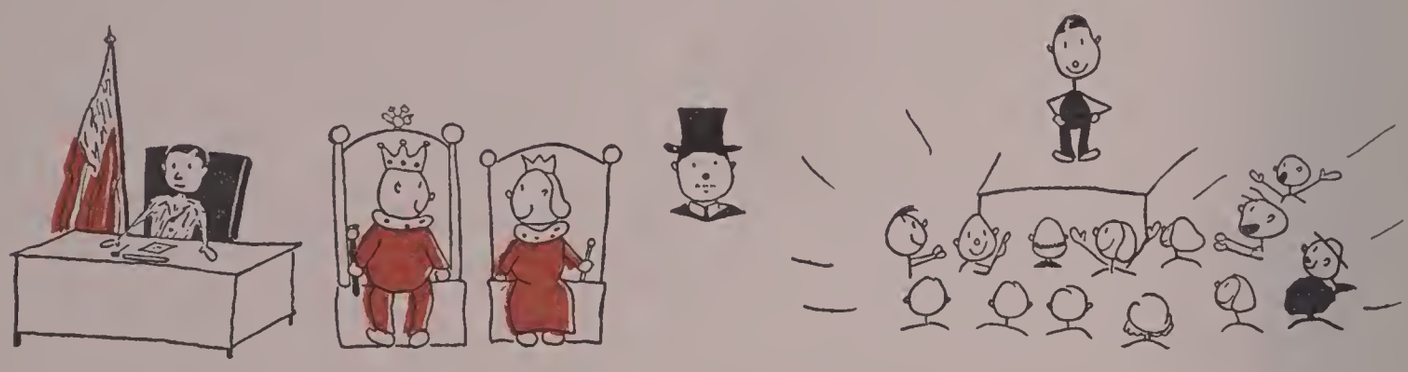
They let members of just one family be the leaders and call them kings or queens.

Some of those countries also let nearly everybody pick other leaders to help the king or queen do the governing or leading.

Still other countries let the strongest men lead them without doing any picking or choosing of them, or making them be members of any particular family. That can work out just as well as any other way if they happen to get good leaders, but it's just too bad if they don't.



There is no country in the world that can say their way of choosing Leaders is the only good way.



The thing that is important is that the Leaders be good ones, no matter how they are picked.

Besides the leaders who govern us, the people who come next in making us a strong or a weak nation are the second kind of Thinkers.

These are the Makers and Doers.

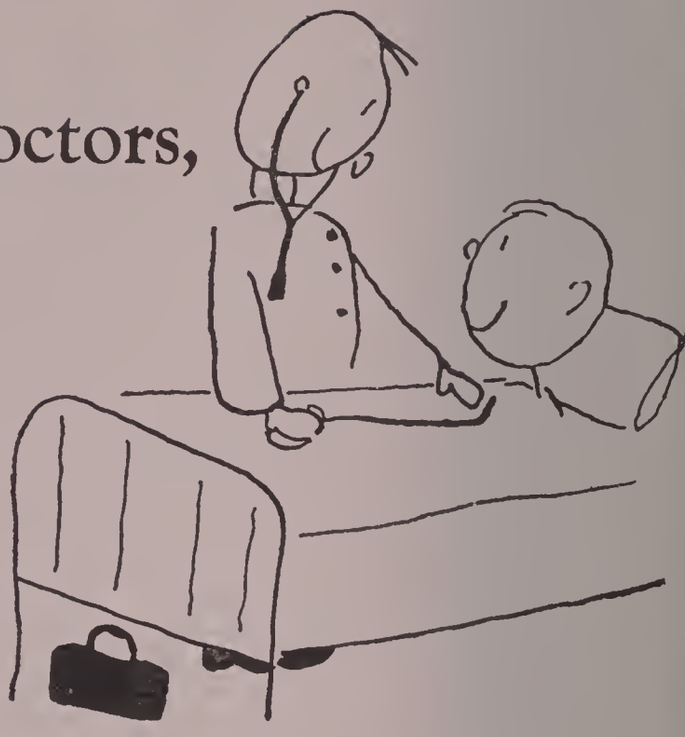
They live in all countries and
ways to make things and new

they are forever thinking up new ways to do things.

We call them

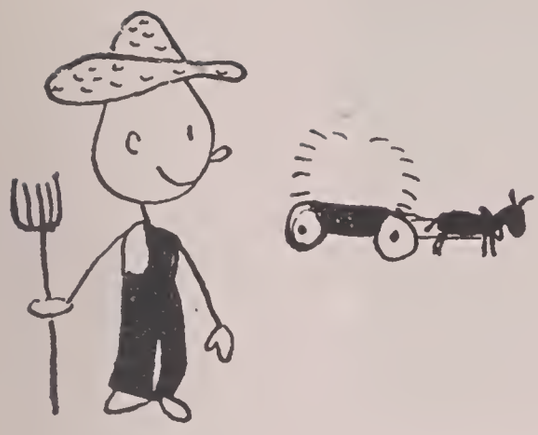
inventors, scientists,

engineers, doctors,



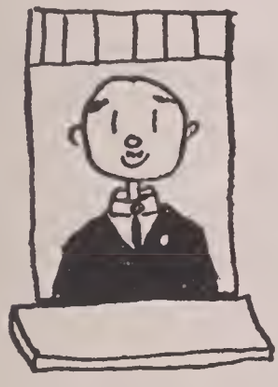
musicians, artists, writers,

farmers, merchants,

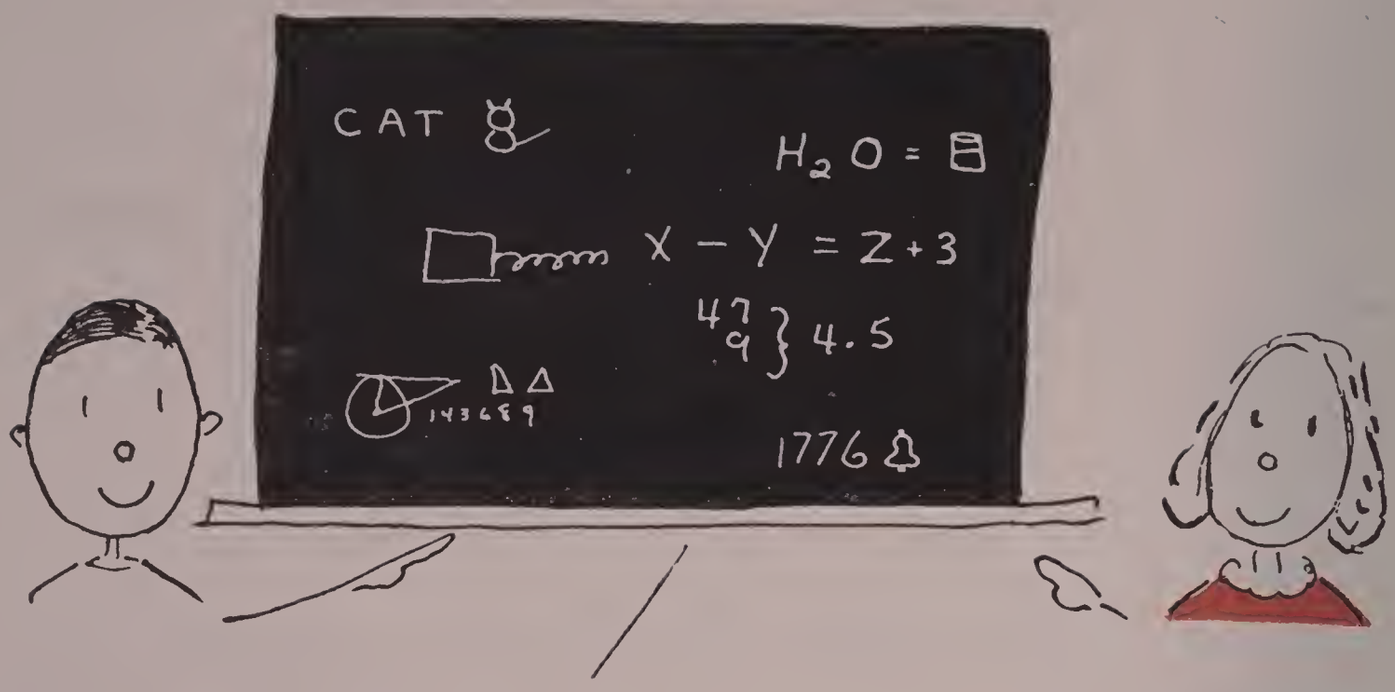


lawyers, workers,
builders, bankers,
and hundreds of other

names, but no matter what we call them, they are the Makers and Doers who by



their
thinking
affect the
way we
all live.



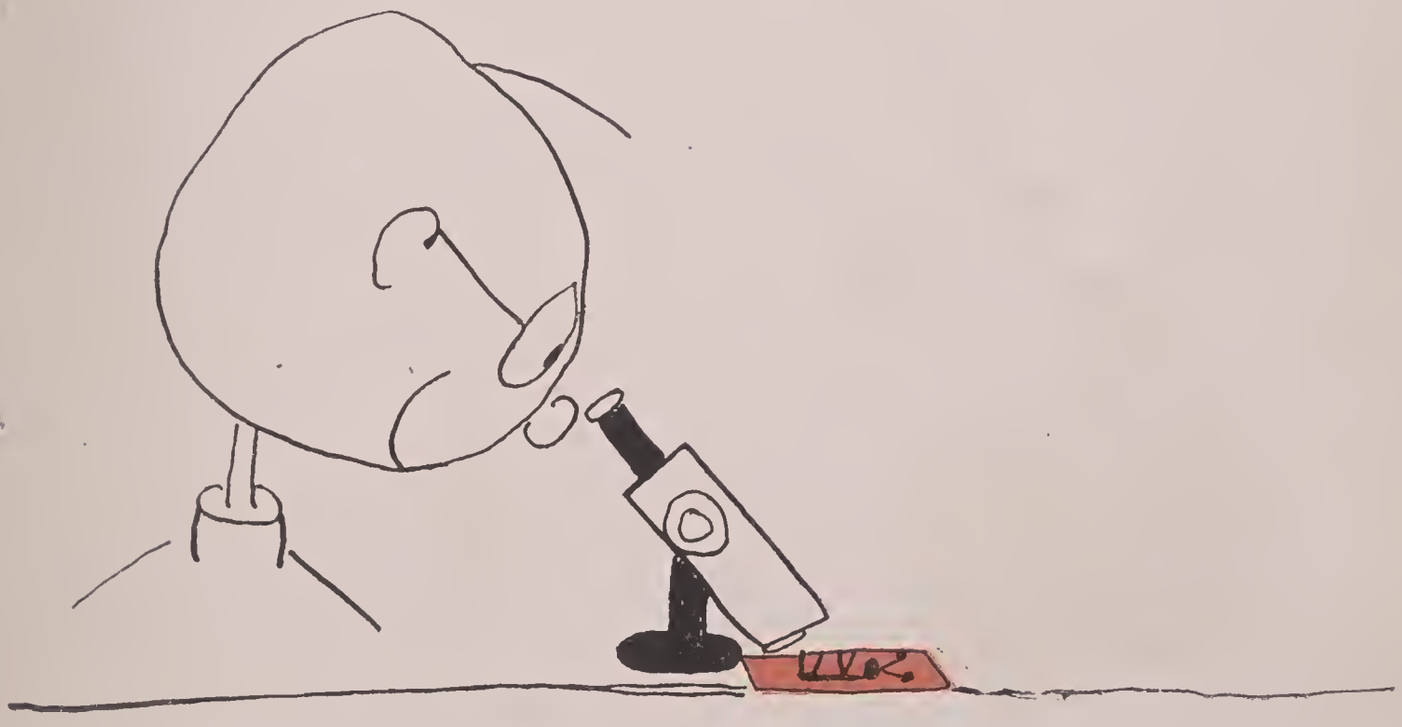
Among these Thinkers there is a kind of people we call Teachers.

These Teachers, many of them Makers and Doers themselves, pass on to others the ways they have learned to make and do things.

The Doctor who finds a new way to kill

germs and keep people alive is one Thinker

we are glad to have in the world.



Those who find ways to make cows give more milk or hens to lay more eggs, or land to raise more corn and wheat or rice;

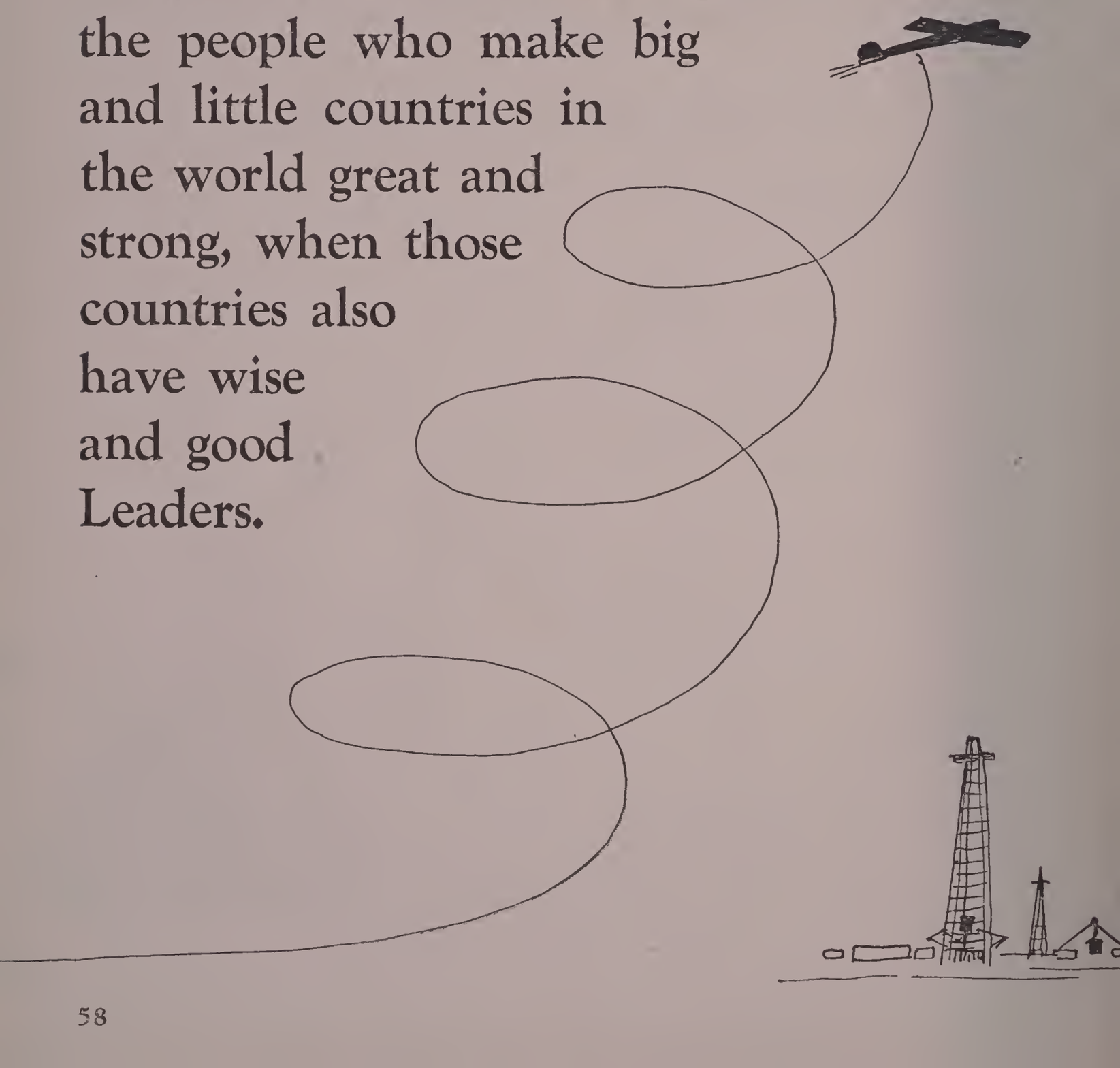
they are some of the ones who help us.

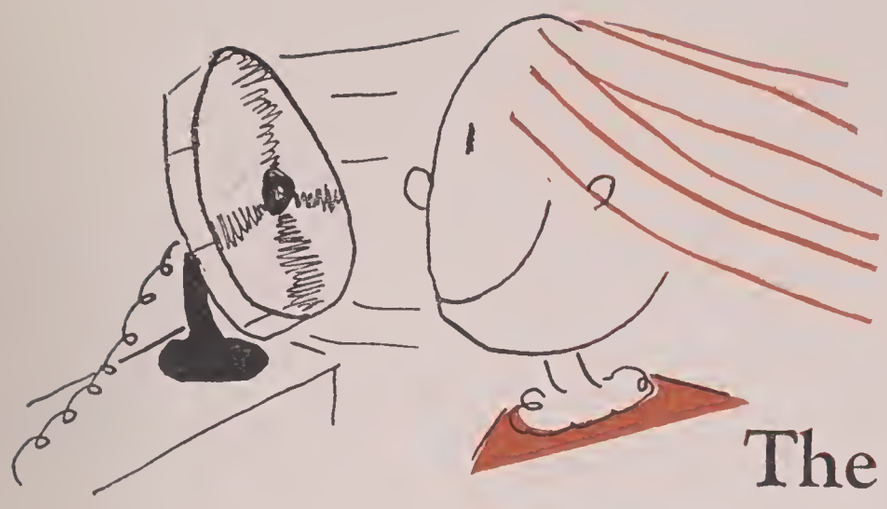
So are the Thinkers who find new ways to

dig coal faster and easier,

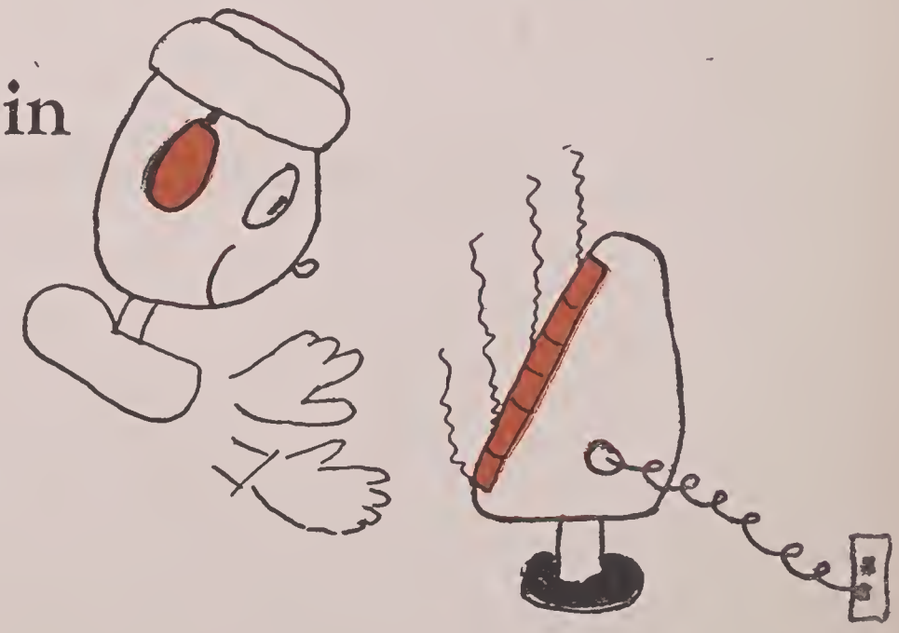
to find oil, to fly airplanes better and farther; to keep us cool when it's too hot, and warm when it's too cold.

People who think of things like this are the people who make big and little countries in the world great and strong, when those countries also have wise and good Leaders.

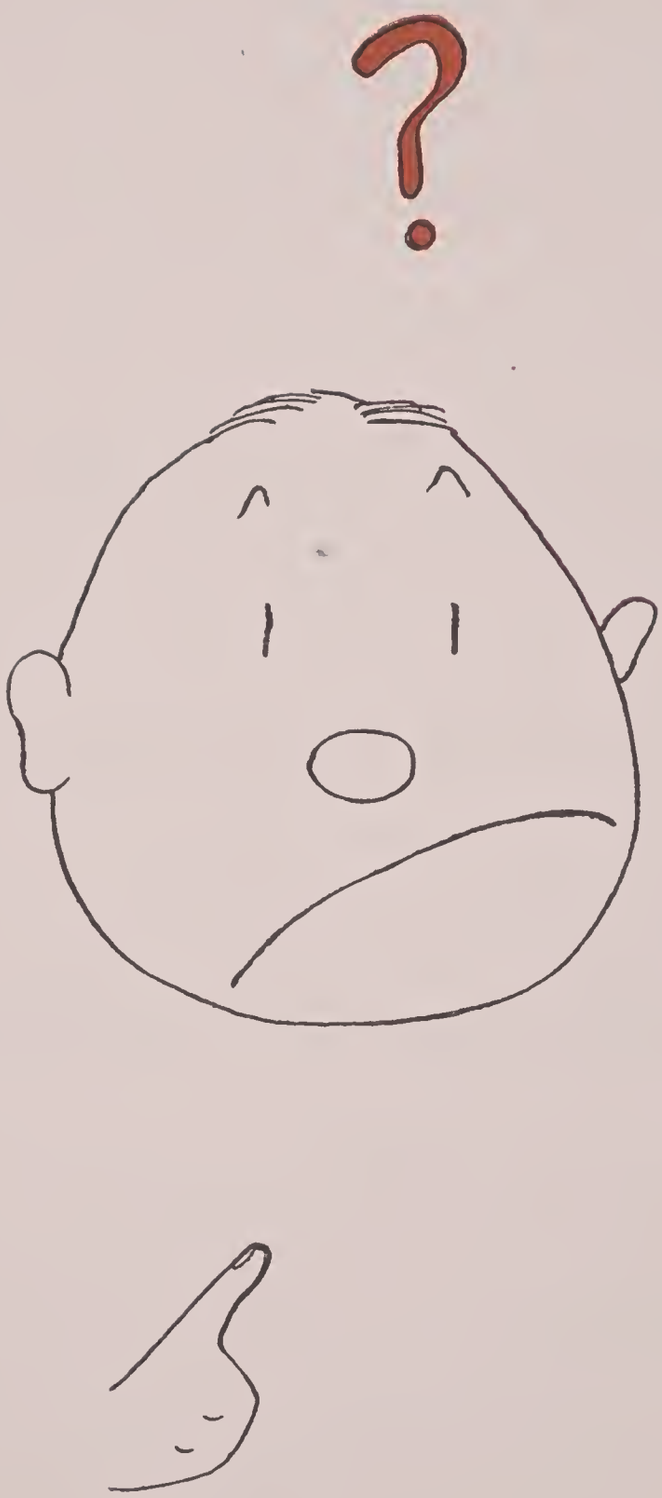




The more we have of them in a country, and the more they teach the good ways to make and do things to many people, the better that country is to live in for everyone.



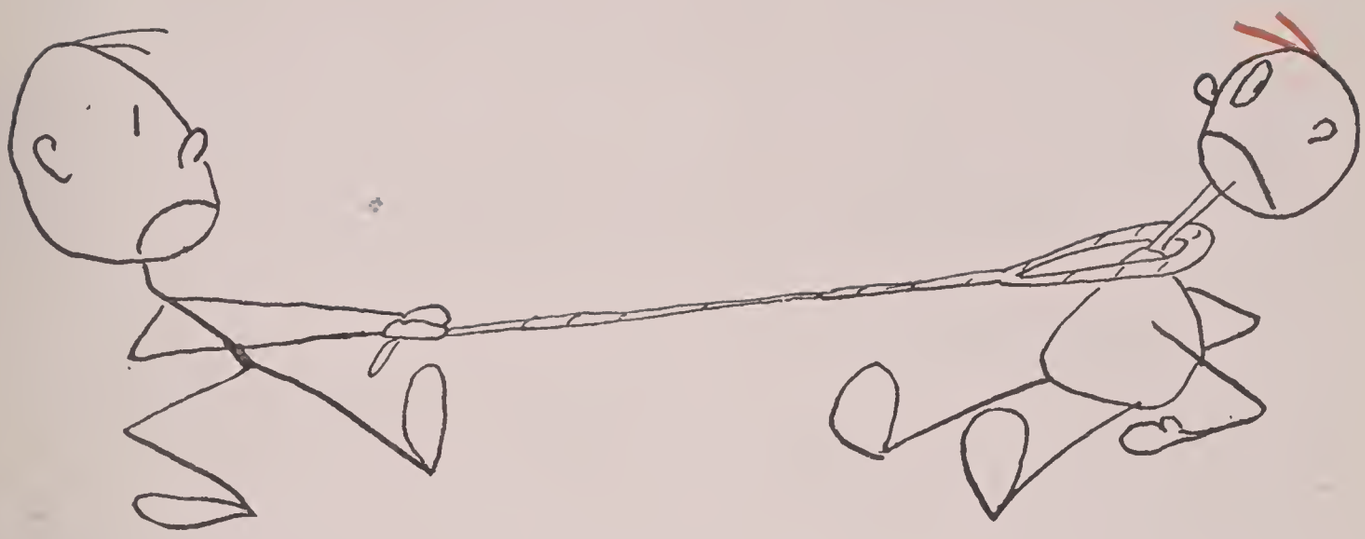
If this is so, then who are these other Thinkers that get us into trouble? What is this third kind of Thinker that makes such a mess of things for the rest of us?



They are the

Selfish Cheaters.

They are the persons who mess things up, who try to push and pull the people of the world around while they are thinking only of themselves.



Unfortunately they too live in every country.

Some are rich

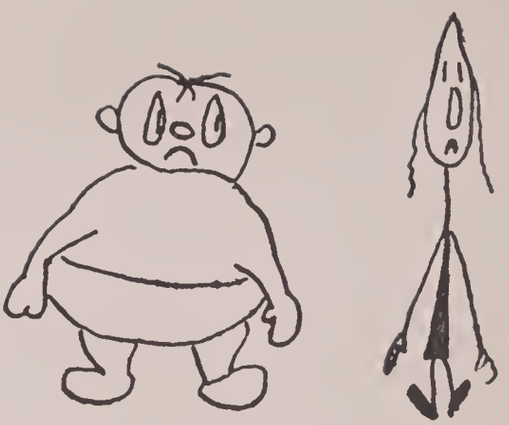
and some are poor.

Some are strong

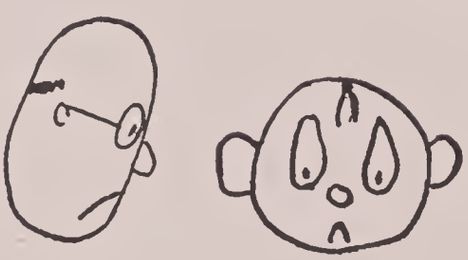
and some are weak,

old, young,

tall, short,



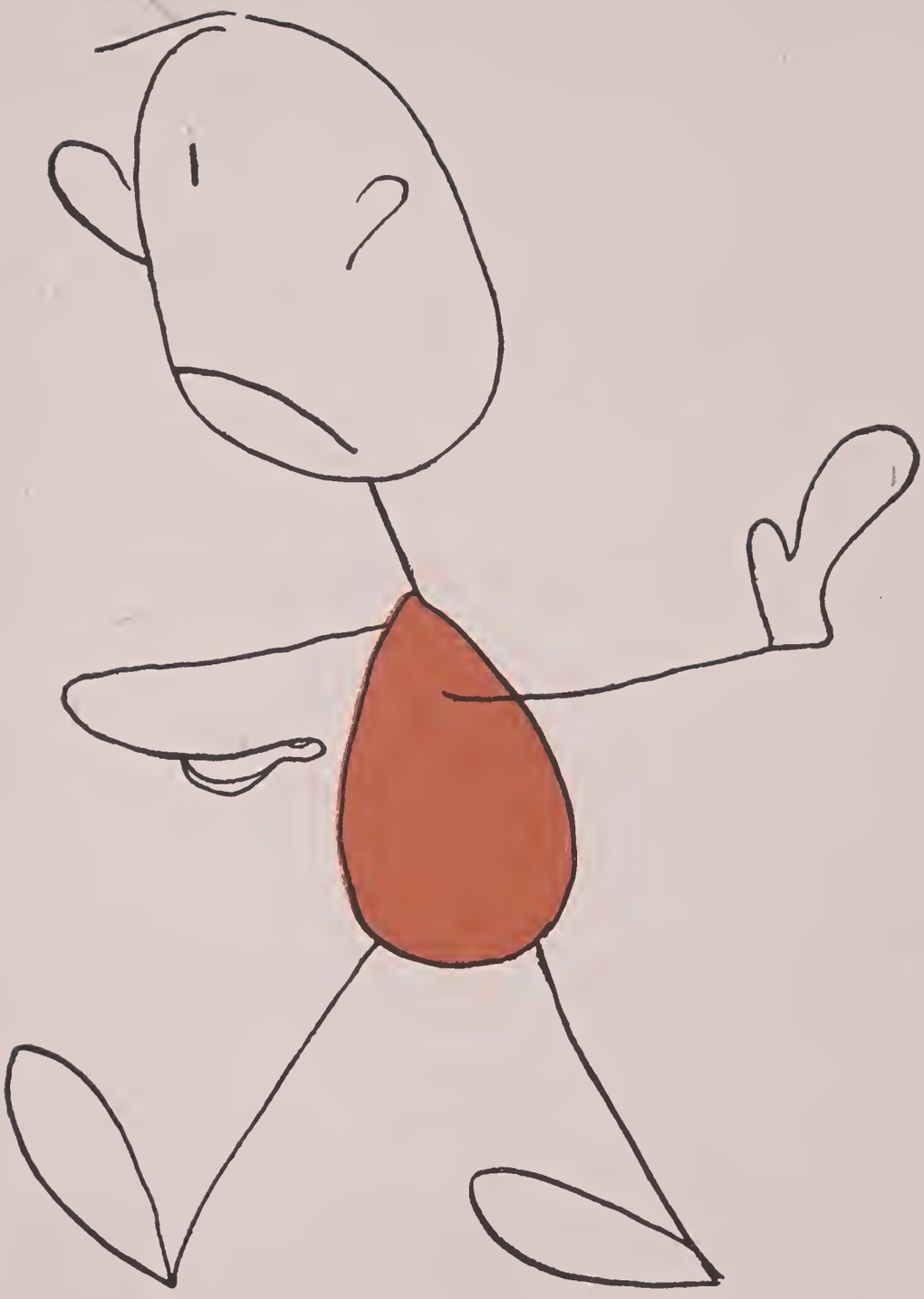
dark, light, fat or skinny, clever or stupid.



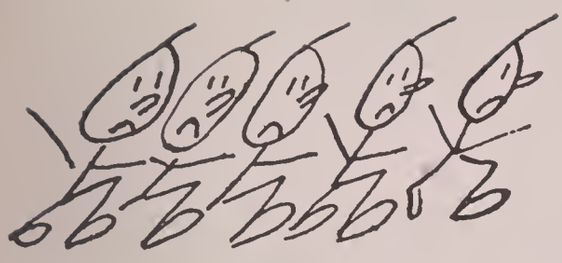
They often look like anybody else but what makes them bad for us and all the world is that more than anything else

THEY ARE SELFISH

If they can, they make other people do things *their* way and *they don't care* how many others are hurt or made unhappy —just so long as they have things the way they want them.



When some people are like that, they may not hurt many others, often just their own families and a few who know them well.



Others fool enough people sometimes to grow strong and powerful, and they become bad Leaders. Then they make trouble for a lot of people, often for whole countries and every now and then for everybody in the world.

They lead the Makers and Doers into thinking of new things and ways to hurt others instead of helping them.

Then even the good and decent people of the world who don't want to, have to do the same just to save their own lives.

That's when we find ourselves in the same fix our ancestors were thousands of years ago

when everybody was scared.

All the fine things men and women have done to help each other, the great cities we have built, our inventions, our medicines,

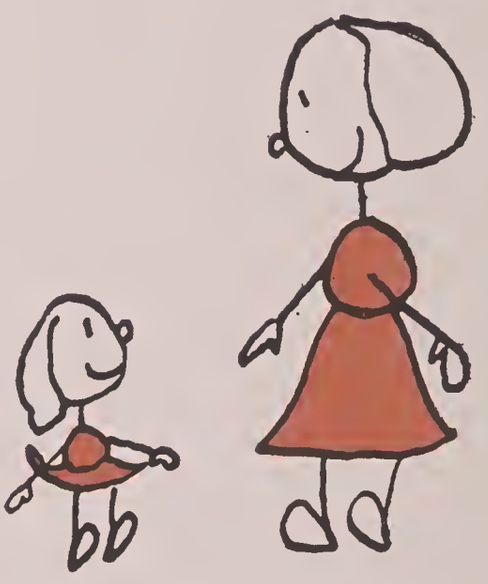
our farms, our schools, our factories, radios, trains, automobiles, telephones, and airplanes can't help us to lose this fear that brings unhappiness to millions all over the world.

We fight wars that most of the people of the world don't want to fight.

If the people of every country will be very careful about who their leaders are, and if we all see to it that the Selfish Cheaters

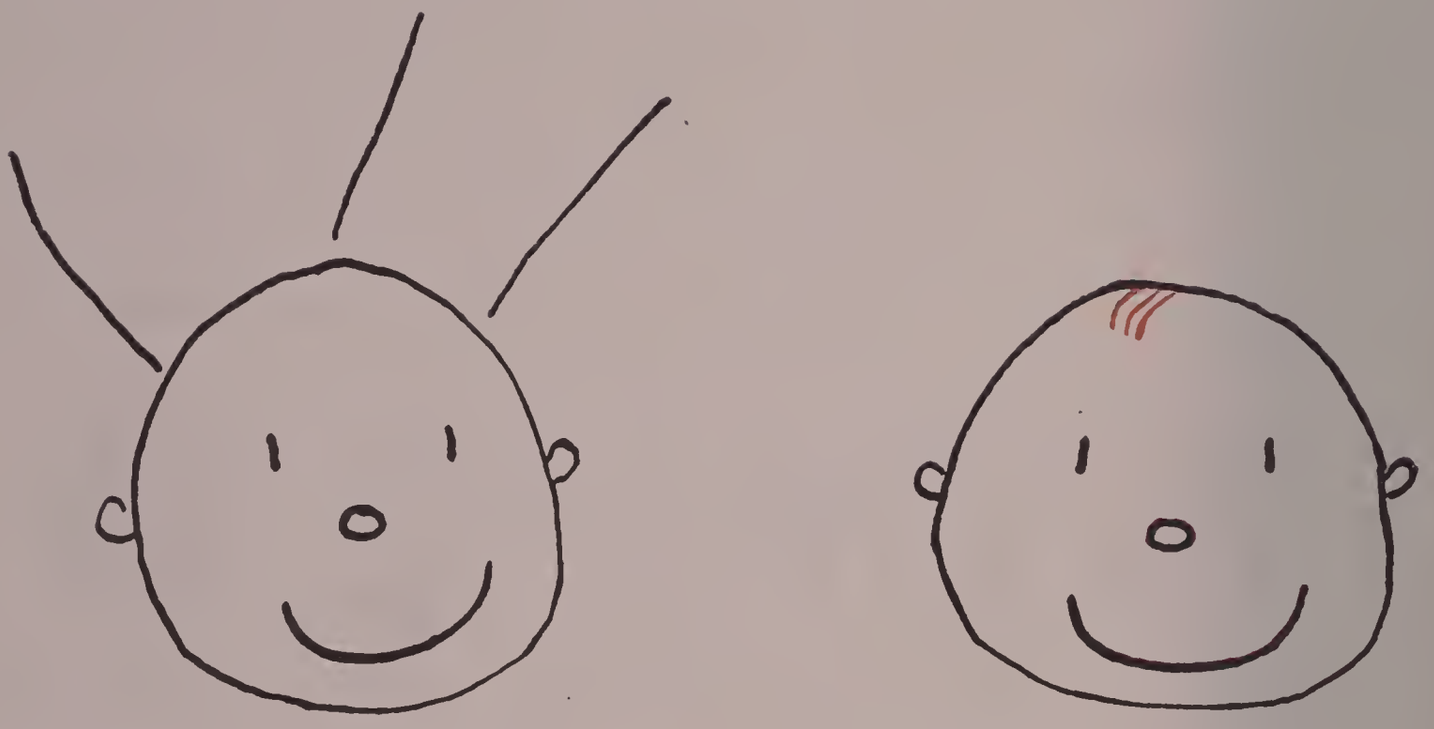
never become powerful, then we can live together in a peaceful world.

All *Thinkers*—the *Leaders*, the *Makers* and *Doers* and even the Cheaters are all boys and girls before they are men and women.



What we do and how we *Think* when we are young is as important as it ever is when we are older.

If we want this world to be a better place,

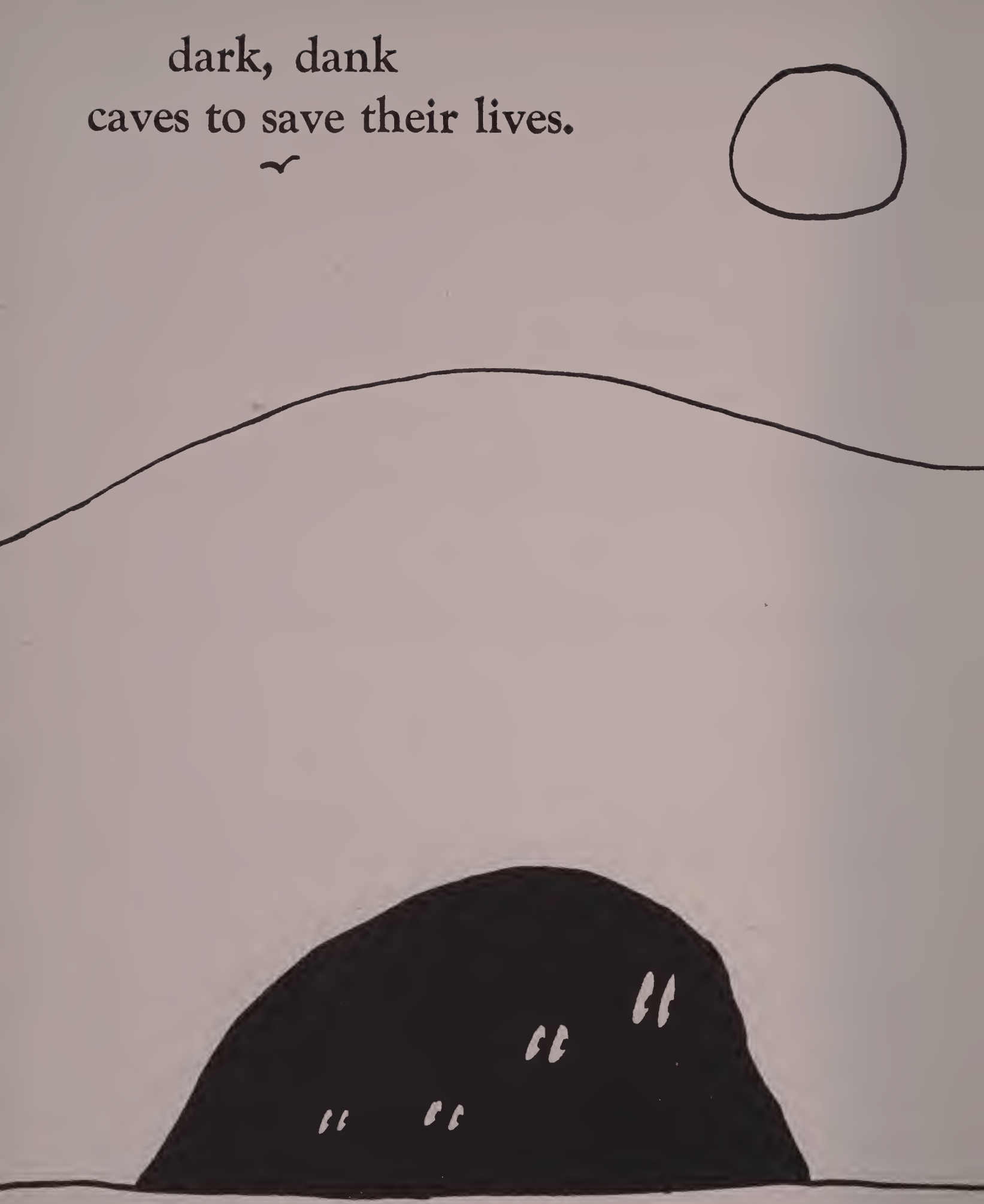


we are the ones who can make it so.

In all the years that have passed, our ancestors have not yet learned to live together so that people all over the world do not have to be afraid of each other.

People in many countries still live in fear that shells and bombs and bullets may drive them back again to living in

dark, dank
caves to save their lives.



It could happen to any of us.

That is still a stupid and a dismal way to live.

Let's be Thinkers all over the world.

Strong, Kind and Unselfish

Thinkers

and

LET'S DO BETTER

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